



Iowa General Assembly

2006 Committee Briefings

Legislative Services Agency – Legal Services Division

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CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENTAL PLANNING STUDY COMMITTEE

Meeting Dates: [December 13, 2006](#)

Purpose. *This compilation of briefings on legislative interim committee meetings and other meetings and topics of interest to the Iowa General Assembly, written by the Legal Services Division staff of the nonpartisan Legislative Services Agency, describes committee activities or topics. The briefings were originally distributed in the Iowa Legislative Interim Calendar and Briefing. Official minutes, reports, and other detailed information concerning the committee or topic addressed by a briefing can be obtained from the committee's Internet page listed above, from the Iowa General Assembly's Internet page at <http://www.legis.state.ia.us>, or from the agency connected with the meeting or topic described.*

CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT PLANNING STUDY COMMITTEE

December 13, 2006

Co-chairperson: Senator Jack Kibbie

Co-chairperson: Senator Larry McKibben

Co-chairperson: Representative Jodi Tymeson

Overview. The Continuity of Government Planning Study Committee was created by the Legislative Council to discuss issues concerning continuity of government and continuity of legislative operations following a disaster. The Committee elected Senator Jack Kibbie, Senator Larry McKibben, and Representative Jodi Tymeson Co-chairpersons. The Committee received testimony from the Legislative Services Agency (LSA) and from representatives from the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division of the Department of Public Defense and adopted recommendations to be contained in the Committee's final report to the General Assembly.

Continuity Laws. Mr. Ed Cook, Senior Legal Counsel, Legal Services Division, LSA, addressed the Committee concerning the various constitutional and statutory provisions governing continuity of government following a disaster. Specifically, the Committee examined provisions governing gubernatorial succession, replacement of statewide elected officials, legislative elections to fill vacancies, and financing of government operations. In addition, issues governing the operation of the General Assembly following a disaster, including the location of session and applicable legislative voting requirements, were discussed.

Continuity Planning. Mr. Steve Zimmerman, Preparedness Bureau Chief, and Mr. Ken Brink, Chief Planner, both from the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division, discussed issues involved with continuity planning. The presenters discussed the tenets of continuity planning and the elements and objectives of good continuity planning. The presenters also discussed the continuity planning that has occurred for the executive branch of government and described planning considerations for developing a continuity plan for the General Assembly.

Recommendations. The Committee made the following recommendations:

- The General Assembly should engage in continuity of government and operations planning which should include coordination with the executive branch in identifying alternative locations for continued operation of the General Assembly following a disaster.
- The membership of the conference designated by statute to determine, if asked, whether the office of governor be vacated due to disability should be changed to replace the nonexistent position of "Director of Mental Health."
- Rules and statutes governing legislative procedure should be examined and modified, if necessary, to provide flexibility for the General Assembly to act if a disaster makes holding session and voting at a common location impossible.
- Any statutory provisions inconsistent with the Iowa constitutional change providing that the office of Governor and Lieutenant Governor not be separately elected should be changed.

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